

1 May 2009

Laurence Summers, Chair
The White House – National Economic Council
1650 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Fax: 202-456-3341

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST ~
re: NEC Organization and Output

Mr. Summers and Concerned Staff:

This Request is made under the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552, concerning the organization of the National Economic Council ("NEC"), and certain operations to date under the current administration.

Note that the NEC website shows only a brief "Overview" on its mission and the credentials of Mr. Summers as Chair – and no public information on its composition, scope, proceedings, or work products, nor reference to any press releases.

Where such general facts are not publicly available on-line or by direct inquiry, it is necessary to seek documentation by FOIA Request. Because NEC actions affect ongoing policy decisions of immediate public concern, your fast *expedited Response* is appropriate to allow timely citizen review; accordingly this Request is also conveyed by Fax for your prompt notice.

Please provide copies of selected NEC documents – or alternatively, electronic versions via email or Web-link – as follows:

A. *Orders or directives from the Office of the President re-establishing the NEC under the present administration, enabling its operations with specified authorities, and mandating the Chair with stated priorities or objectives in its actions.*

B. *Summary documents identifying the "NEC Director", participating agency members of the Council, and principal staff policy specialists in the various fields of purview, as of May 1, 2009. Include memos or directories showing their job positions and contact information, via phone and email.*

C. *Formal reports and memos presented to the NEC by participating agency members, concerning economic policy facts, positions, and actions of their respective agencies, as of May 1, 2009.*

D. *Approved NEC staff findings and recommendations, and/or any official policy statements, decision memos, coordination or implementation plans, or "economic policy advice" rendered by the NEC Director or Chair as of May 1, 2009 – in these policy fields specifically, within the broader sweep of the NEC's stated areas of work:*

(1) financial markets; (2) commerce; (3) labor; (4) manufacturing.

Please list the items provided in accord with this Request, and mark them as needed for clear identification. The Freedom of Information Act provides that if portions of requested documents are exempt, the remainder must be segregated and released. Therefore, it is appropriate that you send all non-exempt portions of the records requested.

Note however that this Request encompasses only "official" presentments and final actions of the NEC, as matters of public information. Where personal correspondence, staff emails, phone notes, discussion memos, and proposed draft documents may be privileged as informal exchange and counsel within the Executive Office, such items are excluded here, and not at issue; conversely every item requested is proper to disclose.

Should you elect to withhold or delete any information, please justify your decisions in writing by referencing specific exemptions of the Act. Under its provisions, I reserve the right to appeal should you withhold any information sought in this Request.

I request waiver of fees on the following grounds:

- These materials are sought *"for the general use and benefit of the public"*, acting on a voluntary basis in journalistic and scholarly research purposes.
- It is anticipated that the total number of re-prints will not exceed 200 pages, and acceptable to receive documents in electronic format to minimize time and costs, as noted above. Therefore this Request falls within the agency's limit for free duplication.
- The requested materials are specific, and items of record within the NEC's main offices, by definition, so search time should be modest and related fees unwarranted.

However I agree to pay reasonable search and/or duplication fees for these materials up to a limit of \$25, if required. Please fulfill this Request for all items, and notify in writing of any items requiring payment over the stated limit.

Since this Request is made in a public interest research capacity, and this information is of a critical timely nature, I ask that your expedited Responses go out as soon as possible.

Please send responsive materials directly to me, either as printed or electronic documents as suggested, at the postal and email addresses listed below as appropriate.

Contact me with any questions at the telephone number provided.

Thank you for your cooperation...

Respects,

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